

Topsfield Conservation Commission

Minutes of February 23, 2011
Topsfield Library Meeting Room

Present: George Hall, Chairman; Holger Luther; Jennie Merrill; Cheryl Jolley; Jim MacDougall; Mark Erickson; Lana Spillman, Conservation Administrator; Lisa Nihan-Demeule, Minutes Secretary.

DEP - Department of Environmental Protection

MassCAPS - Massachusetts Conservation Assessment and Prioritization System

OoC - Order of Conditions

RTC - Rail Trail Committee

TCC - Topsfield Conservation Commission

With a quorum present, Hall called the meeting to order at 7:26 pm.

TCC 2011 Action Plan

MacDougall presented an Ecological Action Plan. His most recent work consists of layering specific maps with various data on top of one another to create one map which the TCC can use to identify resource areas and exemplary habitat of rare species in town. The presentation included, among other things, a history of reforestation in New England, the past and present fish of the Ipswich River, dams in Topsfield and Ipswich, the Hydrology of Ipswich Mills, Topsfield Water Use from 1964 to 2010, and a TCC 2011 Action Plan. Ideally, MacDougall would like to work with DEP and identify water-restricting structures in town and start improving culverts upstream with an area of flood storage perhaps near the Wenham Swamp. He will catalog all culverts with MassCAPS with UMass Wildlife Division. Their computer will run culvert information and prioritize which culverts need to be replaced. Topsfield will become a reference point for eastern MA. Hall suggested that some of the information be incorporated in the Regulations when they're redrafted.

Emergency Certification: 2011-01: 18 Valley Road, (Map 65, Lot 35), Stump

Stump's well ran dry and an emergency well was installed within the Riverfront Area and Buffer Zone. A ratification of the certificate for the installation of the emergency well is needed. Luther motioned to ratify the Emergency Certification. Merrill seconded. A unanimous vote in favor.

Remand Hearing 307-0638: 57 Candlewood Drive/109R Perkins Row, (Map 43, Lot 7), Skeffington/Hayes Engineering

The language of the most recent draft remanded Bylaw OoC was discussed. Hall added more explicit reference to Army Corps Permit criteria for stream crossings. Erickson added editorial and clerical clarifications. Luther motioned to accept the two sets of edits submitted by Hall and Erickson and issue the Bylaw Order of Conditions. MacDougall seconded. A unanimous vote in favor.

Greenscapes North Shore 2011

Topsfield Fair/Essex Agricultural Society has offered to pay the annual program fee of \$1,500 for the fourth year. TCC's portion of this year's materials fee would be \$100. Merrill motioned to accept. Luther seconded. A unanimous vote in favor.

Amerigas - potential gift of property

Spillman has been informed by an Amerigas employee that a portion of their property had been offered to the Town, but the Selectmen turned down the offer. Amerigas would like to have culverts removed. There is a security concern with the proximity to the Rail Trail. Luther will research more and report back to the TCC. MacDougall indicated that restoring School Brook is a very important part of storm water issues. He indicated the Division of Ecological Restoration does have funding for culvert removal and similar projects.

TCC FY 2012 Budget

The budget meeting is Monday, February 28, at 6:00 pm. FinCom needs a level-funded budget. The previous budget needs to be amended, and the error concerning Spillman's remuneration needs to be resolved. Wetland Bylaw Fund is created by fees collected from the administration of the Town's Bylaw. Funds can't be mixed between the Bylaw Revolving Fund and the Wetland Fees Fund. Spillman suggested reinstating two-hours to the department secretarial position, which could be paid from the Bylaw Revolving Fund. Three hours of secretarial assistance were lost with the FY 2010 budget that required a 10% decrease in funds from the General Fund. Jolley agreed it would make better use of Spillman's time. Spillman applied for a senior from the work-off program, but nobody was matched with the Conservation office this year. Luther recommended clearing up the error and leaving the wage account as it presently is. Luther is on the FinCom and will attend the meeting switching hats when appropriate.

Meeting Minutes

Erickson made a motion to accept the minutes of February 9, 2011, as corrected and amended. MacDougall seconded. A unanimous vote in favor.

Luther made a motion to approve the minutes of February 27, March 13, March 27, and June 26, 2002, as the best record available to the current members of the meetings on those dates, with the understanding that present members of TCC were not present. Erickson seconded. A unanimous vote in favor. Hall will draft a disclaimer in order to comply with the Open Meeting Law.

Administrator's Report:

MACC Annual Environmental Conference, Saturday, March 5, College of the Holy Cross, Worcester

Hall is set to speak. Jolley and Spillman are planning to attend.

NPDES Phase 2

Martha Morrison has called Spillman and Luther with concerns about what implementation would cost. Luther indicated that a meeting of the Storm Water Committee will be called. March 11 is the deadline to register a complaint about EPA's MS4 new Phase 2 requirements. Phase 2 contains a lot of compliance. MacDougall indicated that UNH is setting up a monitoring system. Topsfield is in a better position than most towns. Luther indicated that Reading has their program in place.

Rail Train Summer Street to Wenham Line, (Maps 49 & 58: lots 44, 88 and 2, 52) Town of
Topsfield/Rail Trail Committee
Spillman indicated she has not heard from Iron Horse or the RTC recently.

Luther moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:21 pm. Merrill seconded. Unanimous vote in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Nihan-Demeule, Minutes Secretary

Accepted at the TCC meeting on March 9, 2011

Pursuant to the 'Open Meeting Law,' G.L. 39, § 23B, the approval of these minutes by the Commission constitutes a certification of the date, time and place of the meeting, the members present and absent, and the actions taken at the meeting. Any other description of statements made by any person, or the summary of the discussion of any matter, is included for the purpose of context only, and no certification, express or implied, is made by the Commission as to the completeness or accuracy of such statements.